

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 15, 2005

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:


As members of the Congressional Shipbuilding Caucus, we have become aware that the Department of Defense is considering whether to significantly alter the construction strategy for the Navy's next generation destroyer, DD(X). The present strategy contemplated by your 2006 budget request is to build the vessels in two shipyards, Northrop Grumman Ingalls of Pascagoula, Mississippi, and General Dynamics Bath Iron Works of Bath, Maine. The revised strategy being explored by the Department of Defense is to conduct a winner-take-all competition in 2005 between the two shipyards.

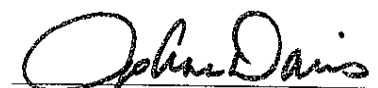
The practical effect of a winner-take-all competition is twofold. First, the program would likely be delayed to accomplish the competition, possibly resulting in the layoff of several thousand highly skilled employees and significantly increasing the cost of ongoing programs at both facilities. The U.S. shipbuilding industrial base has already endured a 75% reduction in employment during the past 15 years due to low rate production. Instability in the DD(X) program at this time could further exacerbate the permanent exodus of skilled men and women from the last remaining shipyards that produce our naval fleet.

Secondly, the losing offeror would likely exit the surface combatant market, forever limiting the ability of this Nation to construct destroyers and cruisers at any significant rate. With regard to Navy force structure, construction of surface combatants at single shipyard would impact the Navy's ability to maintain the quantity of warships stipulated by the fiscal year 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review. Further, it would also limit the number of warships that could be produced to support the force structure that will be defined by the ongoing Quadrennial Defense Review.

We believe that any decision to pursue a winner-take-all strategy for DD(X) is unwarranted, for there is no justification for this proposed action. Consequently, we ask that the DD(X) program be executed as contemplated by your 2006 budget request, with the current split of work planned for both shipyards in design and ship construction. With kind regards, we remain,

Sincerely yours,


Congressman Gene Taylor
Cochairman

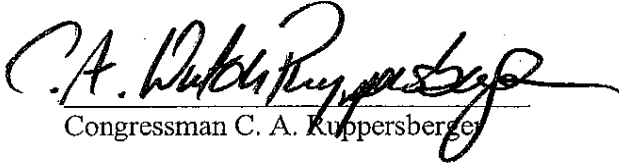

Congresswoman Jo Ann Davis
Cochairman



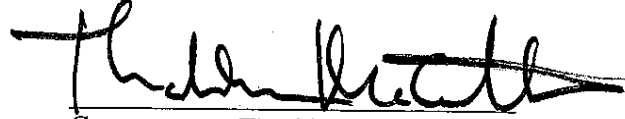
Congressman Christopher H. Smith



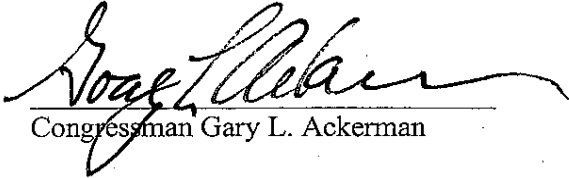
Congresswoman Thelma D. Drake



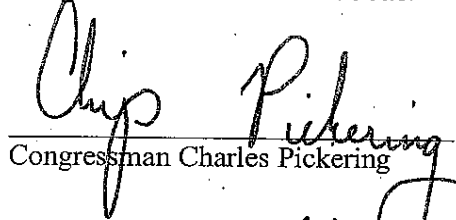
Congressman C. A. Ruppersberger



Congressman Thaddeus McCotter



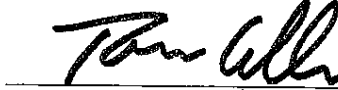
Congressman Gary L. Ackerman



Congressman Charles Pickering



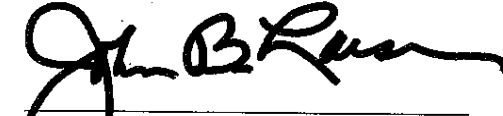
Congressman Randy Cunningham



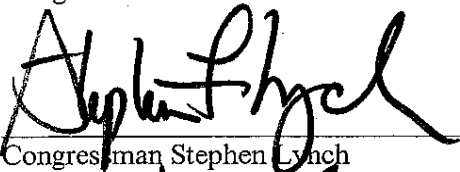
Congressman Thomas Allen



Congressman Michael H. Michaud



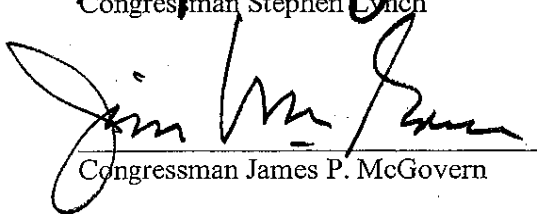
Congressman John B. Larson



Congressman Stephen Lynch



Congressman Steve J. Israel



Congressman James P. McGovern



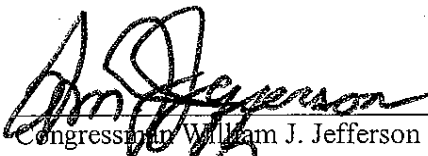
Congressman Bart Gordon



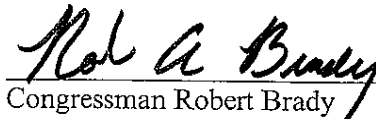
Congressman Mike McIntyre



Congressman Dan Boren



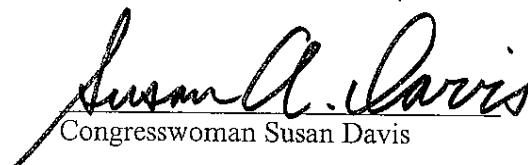
Congressman William J. Jefferson



Congressman Robert Brady



Congressman Charlie Melancon




Congresswoman Susan Davis


Congressman James R. Langevin


Congressman Roger Wicker


Congressman G. K. Butterfield


Congressman Robert Scott


Congressman Sherrod Brown


Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro


Congresswoman Stephanie Tubos Jones

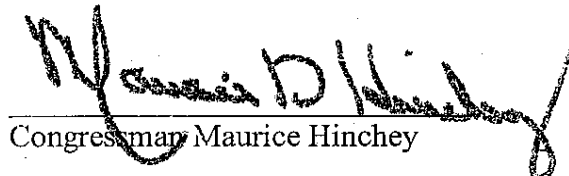

Congresswoman Juanita Millender-McDonald

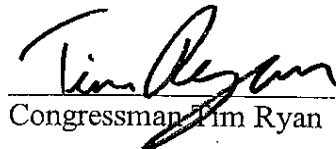

Congressman Jo Bonner


Congressman Rick Larsen


Congressman David Hobson

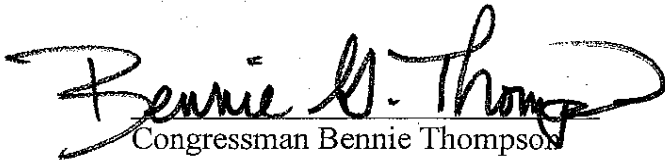

Congressman Frank A. LoBiondo


Congressman Maurice Hinchey

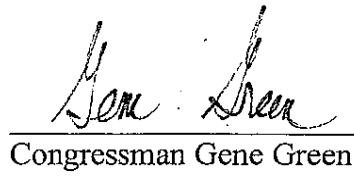

Congressman Tim Ryan

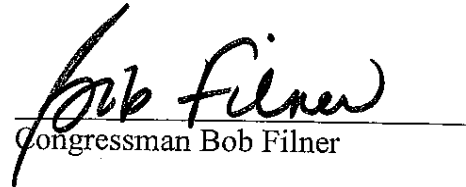

Congressman Mike Ross

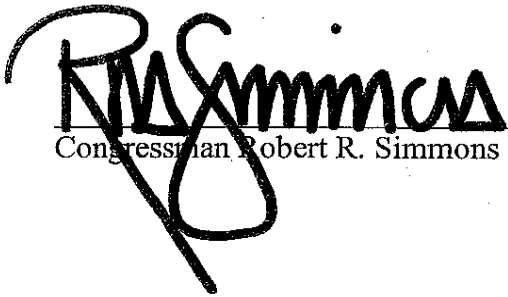

Congressman Patrick Kennedy


Congressman Bennie Thompson


Congressman Rodney Alexander


Congressman Gene Green


Congressman Bob Filner


Congressman Robert R. Simmons